

Roger Brooke Taney to Andrew Jackson, October 18, 1843, from Correspondence of Andrew Jackson. Edited by John Spencer Bassett.

class=MsoNormal>CHIEF JUSTICE TANEY TO JACKSON.

Baltimore, October 18, 1843.

My Dear Sir, I never think of the Hermitage without deeply regretting that I have not been able to visit you there, and to have once more the pleasure of passing some days in your society. But I have long since been obliged to give up the hope I had entertained upon that subject, and to content myself with hearing from you as often as I can, and watching for tidings of you in the newspapers; and I have been very sorry to find their accounts of you have not been of late as favorable as I could have wished. Yet I hope that this fine October weather is improving your strength, and that you are well enough to enjoy the open air.

My own health gave way a good deal last Spring and I have been obliged to spend part of the summer in the country at a sulphur spring in the neighborhood of Winchester Virginia; and I hope that I have recovered health enough to meet the labors of the Circuit courts which 0259 235 are now at hand, and which will probably continue without any interval until I am called to the Supreme Court.

You will see by the newspapers that our elections in this state have gone against us, and indeed they do not seem to be encouraging any where this fall. Retired as I have been from any active concern in political affairs since I have been on the Bench, I was not I confess prepared for the result I have witnessed. But I ought not to have been surprised at what has taken place for our prominent men (or their friends for them) have for many months past been engaged in beating down rivals in their own ranks rather than

Library of Congress

in combating the common enemy. And the natural and necessary result of this conduct in high places, is to produce a feeling of dissatisfaction every where, and to destroy that union of action and object which alone can give success. How different all this is from the state of things, as it was, when you led in the conflict. But I remember your unshaken confidence in the virtue and intelligence of the people, and I trust they will yet in due time bring matters right. Nevertheless I cannot conceal from myself that paper money and its necessary consequences, that is, speculation and the desire of growing rich suddenly without labor, have made fearful inroads upon the patriotism and public spirit of what one called the higher classes of society. And if in our divisions, they get that root of all evil another Bank, it is not easy to foresee how far its powers of corruption may extend.

My family are as well as usual. We often turn our thoughts to the Hermitage, and love to recollect and talk over the many acts of kindness and friendship which we have all received from you. And we join in affectionate remembrance to you and your family, and I am Dear sir

Most truly and cordially Your friend